



SICAR cat assists 29 asylum-seeking human trafficking victims during the first semester of 2018

- The 48% of the assisted persons are Nigerians while the second largest nationality is Colombia, 17%.
- The asylum applications were made at the border, at the Barcelona-El Prat airport on June 20th 2018.

SICAR cat is comprehensive care program for victims of human trafficking. During the first semester of 2018, SICAR cat professionals have assisted a total of 29 trafficking victims who are at the same time international protection applicants: 24 women and 5 minors, including 3 family units. Trafficking victim family units are single-parent families composed of women and their dependent minor children who are in Spanish territory.

48% of these people are nationals of Nigeria while the second largest nationality are Colombians, 17%, followed by Ghanaians and Venezuelans, 7 %. Regarding regions of origin, the majority of the trafficking victims seeking international protection, 59%, are from West Africa (Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana), while 7% are from Central Africa (Cameroon, Republic of the Congo), 28% from South America (Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela), 3% from Southeast Europe (Serbia) and another 3% are from Eastern Europe (Ukraine).

The majority of the women are over 30 years (31%), followed by age ranges 26-30 (28%), and 18-24 (24%). Their minor children account for 17% of the total number of beneficiaries. Gender-based persecution is the main grounds for most of the international protection petitions. Three of these women applied for international protection at the border, specifically at Barcelona-El Prat Airport.

11 of these people have benefited from mechanisms of article 59 bis of the Spanish Organic Law 4/2000. These are for instance the period of recovery and reflection, a precept that is applied in those cases of foreign alleged victims of human trafficking in irregular situation. For at least 90 days, the article provides:

- Provide physical, psychological and emotional recovery of the alleged victims of human trafficking
- Exemption from liability and / or the suspension of the sanctioning proceedings or deportation of the alleged victim of human trafficking
- The alleged victim must decide whether or not to cooperate with the authorities in the investigation and prosecution of the crime. If they decide to cooperate, they are

granted residence and work permit for their collaboration, issued by the Secretary of State and Security, or a residence and work permit based on their personal situation, which is competence of the General Secretariat for Immigration and Emigration.

International Law allows victims of human trafficking to avail themselves of both protection and assistance mechanisms, specifically provided for in the "Aliens Act" (article 59 bis of the Spanish Organic Law 4/2000); as their right to request protection through asylum, when they are in need of international protection, in order to guarantee the principle of non-refoulement and to avoid the risk of suffering inhuman or degrading treatment. In these cases the two procedures are compatible. Therefore, the State must observe the existing interconnection of human trafficking and asylum by guaranteeing that the victims of this crime who need international protection (who are mostly women) can effectively exercise their rights.

- Translation by Asil.cat Network